

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 29, 2022

The Honorable David Price
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
on Transportation, Housing, and Urban
Development
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
Transportation, Housing, and Urban
Development
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Price and Ranking Member Diaz-Balart:

Thank you for your continued leadership on the House Committee on Appropriations and the Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development. We write with support for strong guardrails to the Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing (RRIF) loan program to ensure protection of U.S. taxpayer dollars. While we support passenger rail infrastructure, it is imperative that high-speed rail projects in specific are fully vetted and held accountable through acquiring critical federal permits before obtaining federal funding.

There are proposals for high-speed rail projects in Texas that do not have necessary permits and authorizations from federal agencies to begin construction and operate in compliance with U.S. safety regulations. Analyzing the financial standing of these projects, including any pending legal cases that would completely impair the ability to access the full amount of property needed for such a project, is an urgent priority to appropriately and responsibly delegate competitive infrastructure funds. Therefore, we respectfully request your consideration of the following report language:


Report Language, Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development, Fiscal Year 2023

Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing. –The Committee recognizes the benefit of developing infrastructure for U.S. economic development, access to critical and emergency services, and overall quality of life and access to opportunity. The Committee also recognizes that certain high-speed rail projects cost projections have multiplied over time, leaving the taxpayer to cover the unpredicted cost of such projects. Therefore, the Committee urges that any funds be made to high-speed rail projects under this section provide a non-Federal match of not less than 67 percent; any debt senior to acquiring funds under this section shall have an investment grade rating; all recipients shall document the existence of a revenue stream dedicated to retiring a loan under this section. Lastly, the Committee urges that in the event of bankruptcy of the loan recipient, such loan or loan guarantee shall become equal in status to any primary debt with respect to the project.

Additionally, the Committee urges that no funds under the section be used for any high-speed rail project that has not received a permit to construct from the Surface Transportation Board to ensure responsible planning of infrastructure projects.

We respectfully request your considering of our requests that will strengthen taxpayer safeguards while bolstering the development of feasible high-speed rail projects.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Brady'.

Kevin Brady
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jake Ellzey'.

Jake Ellzey
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael T. McCaul'.

Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Doug LaMalfa'.

Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Steel'.

Michelle Steel
Member of Congress